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*Die Entstehung der Odyssee und die Versabzählung in den griechischen Epen.* By AUGUST FICK. Goettingen, 1910. M. 7.

In this work of his advanced years Fick assumes the entire truth of the theories with which his name has long been associated; there are no doubts and no misgivings—his most common expressions are “sicher,” “zweifellos,” and “ohne Zweifel”; there are no more facts of any value to be found regarding the language or the origin of the Homeric poems; Ruth need expect no gleanings in the fields of this thrifty Boaz.

According to Fick the *Odyssey* consists of four original poems put together by botchers and blockheads. The four poems are a “Nostos” consisting of 1,944 verses divided into eight books of 243 verses each, composed in Chios about 700 B.C.; a “Gegennostos” of 1,215 verses, or five books of 243 verses each, composed in Rhodes a little after 700 B.C.; a “Tisis” of 3,520 verses and an introduction of 110 verses, composed in Crete early in the seventh century; a “Telemachie” of 1,760 verses composed in Laconia about 620 B.C. The two “Nostoi” were blended by Alcman; later poets without poetic ability and with no sense of humor started to piece out and interweave with their own wretched verses these four poems; the absurdity of the one was surpassed by the ignorance of the next: “Dieser Unfug kann nicht von unserem Einleger in den Nostos herrühren, denn es ist rein undenkbar, dass ein halbweg vernünftiger Mensch sein immerhin doch ganz verständig begonnenes Werk in so verrückter Weise fortsetze” (p. 150). It was Kynaithos beyond all others who brought ruin and disaster, he it was who “geschädigt und verwüstet die alten herrlichen Dichtungen.” The poems were mutilated by Kynaithos about 500 B.C., in Sicily, where he produced his version; he created the character of the blind poet Demodokos in order to praise himself; he has long been concealed behind this mask, but has been found out at last (p. 183): “Es kann wohl keinem Zweifel unterliegen, dass in diesen Einlagen der blinde Kynaithos unter der Maske des Demodokos selber steckt und sich in seiner masslosen Eitelkeit selbst verherrlicht.” The plan of the present *Odyssey* “is a crime against human intelligence” (p. 168): “Billig fragt man da, wie kam Kynaithos, denn dieser wird als Verüber dieses *Verbrechens gegen den gesunden Menschenverstand* nachgewiesen werden, zu einer so unsinnigen Anordnung?”

Each of the four original poems found in the *Odyssey* was composed in pure Aeolic Greek, since they can be rewritten in that dialect; verses that cannot be so changed reveal the later hand. The following examples will show how simple the change from the present traditional form to the pure original:

κ 35: καί μ' ἔφασαν χρυσόν τε καὶ ἄργυρον οἴκαδ' ἄγεσθαι. Simply drop the pronoun μ', insert γὰρ, substitute ἔφαν for ἔφασαν, drop οἴκαδ', insert αὐτόν, and behold we have a pure Aeolic verse,

καὶ γὰρ ἔφαν χρυσόν τε καὶ ἄργυρον αὐτόν ἄγεσθαι.

μ 64: ἀλλά τε καὶ τῶν αἰὲν ἀφαιρέται λῖς πέτρῃ. Insert ἴαν, change αἰὲν to αἰεὶ, ἀφαιρέται to ἀγρεῖ, and we have the verse, metrically impossible,

ἀλλά τε καὶ τῶν ἴαν αἰεὶ ἀγρεῖ λῖς πέτρα.

Yet we are asked to believe that bards could make such wholesale changes, but left *κε*, *κεν*, *θεά* in the poems, because they could not force *ἄν* and *θεός* into the meter.

A numerical system founded on the calendar lies at the base of these poems: the week had nine days, the sidereal month twenty-seven days. Now multiply 9 by 27 and we have 243, which is the fifth power of 3; further, 3 times 243 is 729, and this again is twice  $364\frac{1}{2}$ , i.e., twice the length of the solar year. The number 243 is the number of verses in each of the 8 (8 is the third power of 2) poems of the "Nostos." This theory is not to be tested by the poems, but the poems by the theory. All verses which refuse to fit into 243 are to be rejected; e.g., cf. p. 127: "Man erkennt den späteren Ursprung teils schon durch ihre Sprachfehler, sicher jedoch allemal an der Unmöglichkeit, sie in das herrschende Zahlensystem einzufügen."

In the "Gegennostos" the calendar is different; Odysseus stays one year with Circe, one month with Aeolus, a month on the island of the Sun; thus, if we add one month for his other adventures, we have fifteen months, and by figuring the month at thirty days, we have 450 days, or the exact number of verses in each division of the "Gegennostos," a coincidence so remarkable that accident is out of the question. To be sure no one of these divisions has 450 verses, but they can easily be changed. The numbers though fixed are fluid, since when Fick first published his hidden numbers for the "Urmenis" he found the divisions each had 242 verses, but now, since he has found the true number in the fifth power of three, each of these same divisions oddly enough has 243 verses, or a most remarkable agreement with the "Nostos."

Wonderful as the numerical agreements are in these poems it is in the "Tisis" that all the majesty is seen. "This poem has 3,520 verses with an introduction of 110 verses, thus, in all 3,630, and the 3,630 represents ten solar years or eleven sidereal years. Now take away the 110 and we have 3,520, or ten lunar years" (p. 93). To be sure, the introduction has 187 verses, but it must be reduced to 110, else it would not be a multiple of 5, 10, and 11, the only frame on which the poet of the "Tisis" could work.

On p. 193 proof is given to show that the week of seven days was known: "Philoctetes had seven ships, a certain proof of the seven days of the week, also the ship of the Phaeacians had fifty-two men, hence the year had fifty-two weeks." The author hints that this knowledge of a week of seven days and a year of fifty-two weeks may be due to Babylonian influence.

However, the year was most accommodating and shifts at will; cf. p. 200: "Odysseus had twelve ships and in the capture of the goats each ship received nine goats as its share of the booty. Now then, 9 times 12 is 108,

or one-third of 324, the number of days in a sidereal year. But Odysseus received for himself alone ten goats. Just add 10 to 108 and we have 118; but 118 is one-third of 354, the number of days in the lunar year.' Here the lunar year has 354 days, while in the "Tisis" it obligingly had but 352, and the sidereal year here has only 324 days against the 330 of the "Tisis." Exact figures, as a rule, are exacting, but this calendar method requires only that we have some divisor or multiple of 350, 360, 364, 354, 352, 330, 324; or a divisor of some fraction of them, e.g., 243, is approximately two-thirds of 364, hence we can work in groups of 3, 9, 27, 81, and multiples thereof, and so with fractions of all the rest.

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*The Rise of the Greek Epic.* By GILBERT MURRAY. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1907. Pp. xi+283.

As a piece of fascinating and brilliant writing Professor Gilbert Murray's volume of Harvard Lectures deserves extended review. As yet another contribution to the deluge of Homeric "literature," it must be put off with a brief notice. He has actually accomplished the feat of writing nearly three hundred pages on the Homeric problem with little or no mention of Wolf, Lachmann, and the Villoison scholia. Instead of these things he gives a generalized yet vividly concrete and picturesque description by the methods of Renan of how the thing might have happened, thus plausibly leading us to his conclusion that it did in fact so happen.

He describes after Wilamowitz and on the analogy of the Germanic invasions of the Roman empire the weltering chaos in which the Mycenaean civilization broke up, and out of which emerged dimly discerned in the dark ages the Greece that we know—the Greece of the *πóλις*.

"Homerus is the name of an imaginary ancestor" worshiped by the schools of bards who reflect or conventionally preserve the traditions of these ages. The *Iliad* and *Odyssey* took shape in the public recitations of such bards at great Ionian festivals—prototypes of the Panathenaea. In these poems we are brought face to face "with something in a sense greater and more august than individual genius." We associate the unique imaginative intensity that pervades the *Iliad* with something personal. But this is an illusion. The existing texts cannot be accounted for on the hypothesis of one great poet working either near the beginning or near the end of the process. The grand style and imaginative unity of the *Iliad* means "that generation after generation of poets lived in the same schools . . . steeped themselves to the lips in the spirit of *this great poetry*" (italics ours). These schools and the exigencies of their audience maintained the archaizing conventions of the epic (bronze armor, for example) and expurgated the old "Pelagian foolishness" that survives in Hesiod and even in Aeschylus.